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West Virginia Writers' Project
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Revs. A. E. Smith, Mr. and Mrs. James Morton, Faye Burner,
Emmett Galford, Edith Vanheenan and church records.



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Chapter 6 Religion

THE NAZARENE CHURCH IN POCOHONTAS

The Nazarene church in this county had its beginning at Woodrow. There was some confusion in the Methodist church at that place and some of the people wrote to Kentucky for the Nazarenes to send them a preacher. They sent Miss Elsie Martin and Miss Rose Dewitt who held a revival in an old farm house. After the revival closed, Supt. J. W. Montgomery came to Woodrow and received fifteen members into the church. But for about two years they continued to use the old farm house as a place of worship, but under the pastorate of Miss Ruth Coleman, their first pastor, the old school house was bought and converted into a church. Records show that this school house had been sold by the Board of Education to F. M. White and Ella White on Nov. 20, 1925, who in turn sold it to Lloyd VanReenan. Then on Nov. 27, 1925, Lloyd and Leanna VanReenan sold it to the church of the Nazarenes for \$200. cash in hand. It was made into a church and was dedicated in 1926. This church is now free of debt, but there is only a very small class of members. The dedicatory sermon was preached by one of their preachers from Kentucky.

The old charter members were Mrs. Morris Friel, Mrs. Frank Jordan, Emmett Galford, Mrs. Emmett Galford, James Fowler, Annie Fowler, Noah Fowler, Ressie Fowler, Mrs. Frances Galford, Summers Galford, J. Arbogast, Sarah Arbogast, Mary Arbogast and L. Fowler. Some of these have died and some have moved away. What few members remain in the church are loyal to their beliefs and see that there are services every Sunday.

The Marlinton Nazarene church was organized by preachers from the Woodrow church and since that time they have both been served by the same pastor. He preaches at Marlinton in the forenoon, at Woodrow in the afternoon and back to Marlinton for night services.

The present class leader and Supt. is Emmett Galford. The teachers are Mrs. Morris Friel, Mrs. Frank Jordan and Azalee Galford. There is only one Steward and that is Emmett Galford. He has always been one of the main workers.

Frank Nazarene Church

The church at Frank had its beginning with a Prayer Band who held cottage prayer meetings. This band had been organized by Rev. B. W. Murphey of the Marlinton church, who came to Frank and held a revival in August of 1930.

For six years the home of Mr. and Mrs. James Morton was used as a place of worship. They had bought the old school house and had not yet partitioned it into rooms, so they had a large room well suited to accommodate the crowd. They would r beds and move them out so as to have plenty of people have sacrificed much for their faith and among the most loyal and hard working members. This group of Nazarenes began to pray for a church, so in 1935 arrangements were made to buy a building in the deserted lumber town.

This building had been erected at Maywood by the Warden and was called Union Hall. It was never dedicated but was used for that purpose from 1916 to 1920 by Methodists with Rev. Fred W. Grey as their pastor.



when the lumber company had completed their operations in this town and were ready to move out they sold this building to H. M. Widney of Durbin who in turn sold it to the Nazarenes at Frank, one mile from Durbin.

The Pocahontas Tanning Company gave the land upon which the church and the parsonage are built, but no deed has been given. It was built during the pastorate of Rev. J. Roger Morris, and was dedicated on May 24, 1936. The dedicatory sermon was preached by Rev. L. T. Wells, District Supt. from Science Hill, Ky.

The charter members were: James Morton, Mrs. James Morton, Mrs. Arnell, Faye Burner, Edith Terry, Paul White, Bessie White, June Stewart, Dessie Stewart, Elmer Wilfong, Mabel Wilfong and Mrs. Hedrick.

Ministers who have served this church are as follows: L. E. Cobb, O. E. Shelton, J. Roger Morris, Fred Harvey, and the present ones A. R. Smith and Mrs. Smith, both of them are preachers.

(Note-- These Smith came down to Clover Lick in August and held a revival. They have come each Wednesday night since then and held prayer meeting.)

At the present there are 37 members in the Frank church with James Morton, Mrs James Morton, Mrs. Clyde Simmons, and family; Mrs. Brady Wilfong and Daughter; Faye Burner, Mr. and Mrs. Henry Brown, Mrs. B. J. Moore and family, A. Dewey Potter, Myrtle Potter, Mrs. B. Hall and Una Bartley as the main church workers.

There was an average of 88 in the Sunday school

14 members, a Junior Society with 15 members, and a Womans Foreign Missionary Society with 14 members.

The present Stewards and Trustees are Mrs. Robert Wagner, William Lucky, James Morton, Henry Brown and B. J. Moore.

One reason this church has built up to its present strength is because the Methodists at Durbin have been against them. This aroused many of the people of Frank to withdraw entirely from the Methodist church and to join the Nazarenes. Some believe if the Methodists had been more tolerant there would never have been a church built.

The Revs. A. R. Smith tell me that the Nazarene Church is founded on the old principles and doctrines of Methodism as founded by John Wesley, holiness and sanctification. When the Methodist Church began to get away from this doctrine, those members who still believed in it formed into a band and called themselves Nazarenes. If this is true then the Nazarene church is nothing more than old time Methodists.

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Church of the Nazarene, Marlinton, W. Va.

In 1925, Rev. C. F. Pegan, an evangelist, assisted by Ruth Coleman, pastor of the Woodrow Church of Nazarene, conducted a revival meeting at Marlinton. Rev. J. W. Montgomery, the District Superintendent of Nazarene movement, came during the last week of the revival and organized the church.

Some of the first members were:

Perry Boggs

Lay Boggs

Adrian Boggs

W. H. Barnhart

Mrs. W. H. Barnhart

Mrs. Bessie Bright

Mrs. Annie V. Buzzard

Miss Stella Dean

Mrs. Lucy Davis

Mrs. A. E. Dilley

Lillard Buchanan

Ruth Bond

Ruth Gum

Flossie Hoover

Evia Hoover

Mrs. Melvin Lechner

Carrie Lechner

Della Hoover

Willie Hoover

John Meadows
Mary Meadows
Aeta Meadows
Mr. & Mrs. C. M. Kritt
Mrs. Marguerite Rider
Mrs. Sue Rider
Mrs. Nina Robinson
T. L. Scott
Mrs. Rosa Simmons
Margie White
Amos Wooddell
Hazel Weatherholt

Rev. W. A. Brock came as the first pastor and was here only a short time. Rev. M. L. Bayes and wife came and took charge of the work on Nov. 18, 1926. They secured a building in which to worship and the work went forward.

Rev. Bayes left the work in August, 1928. The congregation worshiped in the building Rev. Bayes had secured until the crowds called for a larger building. On July 18, 1925 lots # 18 & 19 in block 30 were bought by the Nazarene Church. The lots cost three hundred fifty dollars and a part of this money was raised by the congregation, the remainder was given by Mr. Amos Wooddell. They now began to plan to erect a tabernacle to worship in temporarily until they could afford to build a church. The Tabernacle was built in 1929 and the crowds could then be taken care of.

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Hard times struck Marlinton and the people thought they could not afford to build a church just then, so the little Tabernacle, even though it was not so comfortable in cold weather, had to be used until the church could afford a better place of worship. The Tabernacle was looked down upon by a few people of the town, but it was a sacred place and the members were devout christians. Some also called it a sheep shed but the members remembered that the Savior was born in a lowly manger with the cattle for his only friends. And so the years rolled on with no church building and no money to build one.

The pastors who have served this church while worshiping in the Tabernacle are:

Rev. C. L. Shelton

" L. E. Cobb.

" J. Rodgers Morris

" Oval Carney

" Calvin Smith

" A. D. Potter

" Harold L. Marsh

Then in 1938 Rev. M. R. Vaughn came as pastor and he at once saw the need of a better building. He and the members at once set to work gathering rocks for a stone church. Things were moving fine but on account of his wife's illness Rev. Vaughn had to leave the work for someone else to complete.

Rev. A. L. Stone was sent as pastor in April, 1940.

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We started at once on the building in good faith. But money was hard to get and he left before the church was finished.

It was then that Rev. Trotter came back the second time, as pastor, and he and some of the men of the church worked faithfully on the building trying to get it finished before cold weather. However, again the pastor was forced to resign on account of bad health.

The present pastor is the Rev. Carl Rutter. He is a good worker and is liked very much by the congregation. He is working on the new building when the weather permits, and with the help of a few of the men of the church, he expects to see the new building finished in the near future. The church is not yet paid for. The members of the congregation for the most part are people of very moderate circumstances. The members are working hard to wipe out the debt as soon as possible.

The church that has been started is a very large stone church and is located opposite the bend in Knapps Creek on the street leading down from the Court House. It is a very pretty location and the church gives promise of being a very attractive looking building. However, it is not more than half way completed at the present time.

Several of the older members have moved away, some of them have died, and others have joined other churches, but new members have been added to the roll, too. At present there are about seventy-five active members in the congregation.

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The church now has a good Sunday School with Carl A. Davis as Superintendent, Miss Naomi Wilson as Secretary, Mrs. Bessie Nottingham as Treasurer and a good group of teachers. The enrollment is about one hundred persons.

The church is also blessed with a fine group of young people, who have organized a Nazarene Young People's Society with Mrs. Lura Scott as President.

The Missionary Society, prayer service, and preaching services as well as all other programs of the church are carried on regularly.

Information: Mrs. Lura Scott

Mrs. Galford

Church books.